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# Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 SP-02 CIAE-00 INR-07
NSAE-00 DHA-02 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 AID-05
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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9645

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 2129

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP, PINT, SHUM, AR (GROSSMAN, AMERICO)
SUBJECT: TRAVEL PLANS OF AMERICO GROSSMAN

REF: BUENOS AIRES 2065

1. GROSSMAN INFORMS US THAT AS A RESULT OF CONVERSATIONS HE HAS HAD WITH GOA OFFICIALS IN PREPARATION FOR HIS TRIP, HE HAS BEEN AUTHORIZED TO PASS ON TO US THREE BASIC OBSERVATIONS:

(A) DISCUSSIONS OF ARMY GENERALS LAST WEEK RESULTED IN VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN PRESIDENT VIDELA. GROSSMAN SEES ADMIRAL MASSERA AS SATISFIED WITH THIS STRENGTHENING OF VIDELA'S AUTHORITY. ACCORDING TO GORSSMAN, MASSERA HAS BEEN CONCERNED PRIMARILY ALL THESE MONTHS WITH VIDELA'S LACK OF STRONG LEADERSHIP.

(B) TOP LEADERSHIP OF GOA RECOGNIZES THE NECESSITY OF EXERTING GREATER CONTROL OVER SECURITY FORCES INVOLVED IN SUPRESSION OF SUBVERSION. DECISION HAS BEEN MADE TO CREATE A UNIFIED COMMAND TO END ABUSES BY DECENTRALIZED, UNCONTROLLED COMMANDO GROUPS. NO ACTION WILL BE TAKEN WITHOUT THE KNOWLEDGE OF THE JUNTA.

(C) GOA TALK ABOUT BEGINNING DIALOGUE WITH IMPORTANT POLITICAL SECTORS, INCLUDING PERONISTS, IS A NEW OBJECTIVE. THE DIALOGUE WILL BE PUBLIC, ALTHOUGH NO DATES OR PRECISE PLANS HAVE BEEN
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DECIDED.

2. GROSSMAN PRESENTED US WITH A SET OF STATISTICS HE WILL BE TAKING WITH HIM TO WASHINGTON, WHICH HAVE BEEN SUPPLIED BY THE NAVY. THIS DATA, WHICH WE WILL BE POUCHING THIS WEEK, INCLUDES (A) A TALLY OF THE NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS HELD AT DISPOSITION OF EXECUTIVE POWER (4356); THOSE RELEASED (1621); AND NUMBER

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PASSED TO COURT SYSTEM (1502); (B) A LISTING OF THE DECREES ORDERING THE RELEASE OF PRISONERS HELD BY THE EXECUTIVE POWER, INCLUDING DECREE NUMBERS, DATES, AND THE NUMBER OF PRISONERS INVOLVED (1762 IN ALL) PLUS THE DECREES AUTHORIZING EXPULSIONS ABROAD (24 IN ALL); AND (C) A LIST NAMING INDIVIDUALS PURPORTEDLY KILLED BY SUBVERSIVES BETWEEN JANUARY 1970 AND DECEMBER 14, 1976. AT FIRST GLANCE, THE NUMBERICAL TALLIES APPEAR TO BE NOTHING MORE THAN WHAT ALREADY HAS BEEN RLEASED BY THE GOA TO THE PRESS. THEY DO NOT INCLUDE THE TOTALITY OF INDIVIDUALS "KIDNAPPED" IN RECENT YEARS. MOREOVER, ACCORDING TO OUR KNOWLEDGE, MANY INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE BEEN LISTED AS RELEASED FROM EXECUTIVE CONTROL HAVE NEITHER BEEN PASSED TO THE COURTS NOR RETURNED TO THEIR HOMES. THE LIST OF ASSASSINATION VICTIMS, PRESUMABLY INTENDED TO DEMONSTRATE "THE OTHER SIDE" OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS STORY FROM THE GOA'S VIEW, IS ALSO SUSPECT SINCE MORE THAN HALF ARE ATTRIBUTED TO "NON IDENTIFIED GROUPS" OR "PROBABLY LEFTIST GROUPS." WE NOTE, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT THE LIST INCLUDES FOUR TUPAMAROS, INCLUDING FORMER URUGUAYAN POLITICIANS GUTIERREZ RUIZ AND ZELMAR MICHELINI, AS "KILLED BY TRAITORS." IT MAY BE THAT THE MAJORITY INCLUDED IN THIS LIST HAVE BEEN KILLED BY LEFTIST TERRORIST ORGANIZATIONS, BUT WE WILL REQUIRE MORE TIME FOR FURTHER ANALYSIS.

3. WE, OF COURSE, WILL BE EXPLORING FURTHER GROSSMAN'S ASSERTIONS STATED IN PARA 1 ABOVE. AT THIS POINT, WE ARE SURPRISED BY THE COMMENT CONCERNING MASSERA'S ALLEGED COMPATABILITY WITH VIDELA ALL THESE MONTHS.

4. GROSSMAN IS ALSO CARRYING WITH HIM A LETTER FROM
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JUSTICIALISTA PARTY ACTING PRESIDENT FELIPE BITTEL IN EFFECT AUTHORIZING HIM TO UNDERTAKE THIS INITIATIVE, AND SETTING FORTH THE PARTY'S OVERVIEW OF THE QUESTIONS AT ISSUE. ALTHOUGH A PERONIST PARTY LEADER, GROSSMAN HAS CLOSE TIES TO ADMIRAL MASSERA. HE MAINTAINS THAT HIS TRIP IS HIS OWN IDEA AND THAT IT IS SELF-FINANCED; HOWEVER, IT HAS BEEN FULLY CLEARED BY TOP LEVEL GOA OFFICIALS IN ADDITION TO HIS PARTY'S LEADERSHIP. NO MATTER HOW THE TRIP IDEA WAS ORIGINATED, IT IS CLEAR THAT GROSSMAN'S INTENT IS TO IMPLORE US OFFICIALS NOT TO IMPOSE FURTHER SANCTIONS ON GOA IN ORDER NOT TO DISRUPT WHAT HE PERCEIVES AS A PIVOTAL, AND POTENTIALLY PROMISING, POLITICAL MOVEMENT. HE ALSO INTENDS TO CONTACT AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE LEADERS TO DISCUSS ANTI-SEMITISM IN ARGENTINA. WE DO NOT DOUBT HIS GENUINE CONCERN ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN ARGENTINA AND THEIR REPERCUSSIONS ON US-ARGENTINE RELATIONS. BE-CAUSE OF HIS LONG HISTORY OF FRIENDSHIP AND UTILITY TO EMBASSY, WE REQUEST THAT EVERY COURTESY BE GIVEN HIM IN TERMS OF ARRANGING MEETINGS WITH APPROPRIATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS. HOWEVER, THE DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE CAUTIOUS ABOUT ARRANGING APPOINTMENTS FOR

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HIM WITH NON-USG INDIVIDUALS (OR WITH CONGRESS) INASMUCH AS HIS TIES TO MASSERA COULD CAST SUSPICION ON HIS MOTIVES AND CREATE CONFUSION AS TO WHOM HE REPRESENTS. AS GROSSMAN HAS BEEN A CLOSE CONTACT OF EMBASSY POL COUNSELOR SMITH, WE HOPE THAT SMITH WILL BE AVAILABLE TO HELP DESK OBTAIN ANY FURTHER CLARIFICATIONS THAT MAY BE NECESSARY. GROSSMAN ALSO INTENDS CONTACT AMBASSADOR AJA ESPIL AND ADMIRAL MENDIA REGARDING PROGRAM ARRANGEEMENTS.
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